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THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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September 12, 1958

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Dear Allen:

We have studied your memorandum of August 19 on Soviet propaganda, and fully agree with the conclusion that we cannot realistically expect to reach an effective agreement with the Soviets on war propaganda.

The Soviets, of course, have already proposed a summit agenda item on this, and I am enclosing a brief which sets out our thinking on how we should handle it if it ever comes to the point of discussion. The brief was prepared in consultation with the British and French. The materials which you sent over will also be helpful to us.

Sincerely yours,

JFD  
John Foster Dulles

Enclosure:

Brief.

The Honorable  
Allen W. Dulles, Director,  
Central Intelligence Agency.

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SOVIET PROPOSAL: "CONCERNING THE CESSATION OF PROPAGANDA OF WAR, ENMITY AND HATRED AMONG PEOPLE"

Comment The Western Governments do not recommend the inclusion of an item covering war propaganda on the agenda but have no objection in principle to a discussion of this subject.

The Western powers deplore any propaganda which tends to promote war, enmity and hatred and continue to give support to the resolution of the UN General Assembly of November 3, 1947.

As comment on the Soviet proposal, they would like to make the following points:

In introducing its item, the Soviet Union complains that in a number of countries, undoubtedly referring to the US, UK and France among others, there is much talk of the inevitability of a new war, the necessity of nuclear armaments and a further increase in military budgets and taxes. The Soviet Union calls upon us to pledge ourselves to suppress this talk. But this is not a problem which can be solved by internal legislation as the Soviet memorandum implies. Indeed legislation imposing censorship, control of information and secrecy increases misunderstanding, stimulates hatred between peoples and is one of the prime causes of international tension. It is rightly regarded in our countries as counter-productive and retrograde and would never be accepted by our peoples. Not only do we not intend to abridge the freedom of the press, which is a cornerstone of democracy, but also we wish to point out that the concern about the dangers of war expressed in our countries is basically engendered by Soviet actions and policies. The root of the matter is to arrive at such settlement of our differences as will allay the fears and apprehensions of our peoples as reflected in the press.

Failing the achievement of a genuine settlement of the major issues between us, a concrete contribution can be made toward improving our relations and the international climate through measures aimed at affording our peoples access to full information on political, economic and social problems that face us, placing full confidence in their ability to make just and sound judgments. The Western powers cannot believe, as the Soviet Government often contends, that the result of such action would be the development of attitudes hostile to them. On the contrary, they believe that if the exchange of ideas and information were greatly expanded this would contribute significantly to the removal of misunderstanding and the easing of tension between peoples.

The Western powers feel that concern about war and feelings of enmity and hatred among people are in fact nurtured by the present systematic

distortions...

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distortions in the Soviet press of Western attitudes and policies and are compounded by the lack of access by Soviet peoples to factual information. A recent example of distortion of Western attitudes and policies is the Moscow Declaration of November 1957 issued by the Soviet Union and eleven other Communist regimes. In this declaration the Soviet Union pictured the Western Governments as imperialist - as "sworn enemies" of the people, bent on aggression. It called for the working people of our countries to enter an active struggle for "socialism" (i.e. Soviet style communism as the recent controversy between the USSR and Yugoslavia once again demonstrates). Although the declaration indicates that this struggle can under certain circumstances be carried out without revolution or war it clearly supports both where those who differ with the aims of the Soviet communism dare to resist the pressures generated.

The defensive measures taken by the Western powers, and statements intended to encourage their peoples to defend themselves, are normal and necessary reactions of those peoples to the aggressive actions and declarations of the Soviet Government. It does not solve any problem to call military measures in Communist countries peaceful, but those in non-Communist countries warlike.

Instructions on Tactical Handling of Topic We should prefer you not to be drawn too deep into controversy at this stage, as we do not want to reveal our hand which is strong in trumps.

Nor do we wish to try to change the wording of this item or to table a propaganda item of our own in different terms. We wish to place the entire onus on the Russians for having this propagandist item on the agenda at all. We shall then be free to use all our ammunition, which is considerable, against Soviet propaganda without being under any obligation to put forward "constructive" proposals ourselves. To place ourselves under such an obligation would be embarrassing owing to the impossibility of imposing controls over what the Russians call "propaganda" in a free country.

Gromyko may try to associate this item with our topics under general heading III "International exchanges" or to bargain its withdrawal for the withdrawal of one or all of these topics. We do not wish to strike such a bargain and we should prefer the Soviet item not to be associated with heading III as the Russians would use it as always to blur the issues. If we must have it, it would stand far better as a purely Soviet item under heading IV "Methods of improving International cooperation" or "Other topics".

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